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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 45th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VILCHEZ ASHER (Nicaragua)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 9.55 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Final appropriations for 1994-1995

1. The Fifth Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should approve the amount of $2,632,435,300 for expenditures in 1994-1995, as adjusted by the Advisory Committee.

2. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that at an earlier meeting his delegation had raised various questions relating to the final appropriations, and would have welcomed time to consider the responses in view of the significant cost implications. Nevertheless his delegation had participated in approval of the final appropriations in order to enable the Committee to complete its work.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997 (continued)

3. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to adopt the following draft resolution on the administrative expenses of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, previously adopted informally by the Committee:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the report of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board for 1995 to the General Assembly and to the member organizations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,

"1. Concurs with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the administrative expenses of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund;

"2. Approves expenses, chargeable directly to the Fund, totalling $40,208,300 net for the biennium 1996-1997, and an increase in expenses of $835,500 net for the biennium 1994-1995, for the administration of the Fund;

"3. Authorizes the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to supplement the voluntary contributions to the Emergency Fund, for the biennium 1996-1997, by an amount not exceeding $200,000."

4. The draft resolution was adopted.

Draft resolution A/C.5/50/L.30

5. Mr. ABELIAN (Armenia) said that under section IV of the draft resolution the General Assembly would decide that the amounts under expenditure sections 1 to 33, as provided under section III of the draft resolution, represented a provisional total of $2,712,265,200; would also decide that the projected level of savings to be achieved during the biennium would be $103,991,200; would further decide that the total level of expenditure provided for in 1996-1997 was $2,608,274,000; and lastly would decide that that amount should be assessed on Member States.

6. The draft resolution also reaffirmed the importance of General Assembly resolution 41/213 to the budget process. He trusted that it could be adopted without a vote.

7. Draft resolution A/C.5/50/L.30 was adopted.

8. Mr. SCOTTI (France) said that the fact that the Committee had adopted the draft resolution on the basis of the English text only was an exceptional situation. Every effort must be made to respect multilingualism.

9. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that adoption of the draft resolution by consensus was important in terms of ensuring the provision of resources to fully implement United Nations activities. The Group of 77 and China reaffirmed the importance of both the procedures established in General Assembly resolution 41/213 and of preparing the programme budget in accordance with the priorities established in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised. It was also important for Member States to demonstrate the requisite political commitment by ensuring that the necessary resources were provided.

10. Mr. KELLY (Ireland) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals in respect of sections 3 and 26B. In that connection his delegation had reluctantly accepted the failure to establish any of the 27 posts requested by the Secretary-General under the regular budget on the understanding that the number of posts and the level of appropriations under those sections were provisional and would be reviewed during the examination of the support account and that any posts that might be established would be the subject of revised estimates in the context of the first performance report.

11. Mr. AMARI (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, welcomed the adoption by consensus of the budget for the biennium 1996-1997. Nevertheless the African Group was disappointed that the overall level of resources proposed by the Secretary-General had not been accepted. In particular the African Group regretted that the procedure followed to arrive at a consensus had negated the procedure embodied in General Assembly resolution 41/213, which provided a mechanism for prior consultations between the Secretary-General and Member States on the level of resources required, with the understanding that once consultations had been completed the resulting proposals of the Secretary-General would be accepted by Member States. The development called into question the utility of continuing the practice of adopting the budget by consensus.

12. Now that Member States had adopted by consensus a budget at a level lower than that proposed by the Secretary-General, he trusted that all Member States, without exception, would fulfil their obligations to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time, and without conditions, to enable the Secretary-General to implement the Organization's mandates. Member States with outstanding contributions, particularly those Member States that were major contributors, should pay their outstanding arrears as a demonstration of their commitment to the Organization. That was particularly crucial if the financial crisis bedeviling the Organization was to be overcome.

13. The Secretary-General, in implementing approved programmes in the upcoming biennium, must adhere strictly to mandates adopted by the General Assembly and ensure that there was a minimal adverse effect on priority activities under the medium-term plan. Such activities should have a first claim on any resources made available through savings. The Secretary-General should seek the Assembly's approval prior to implementing proposals which might impact adversely on mandated programmes and activities.

14. The African Group welcomed the decision to establish a separate programme budget section specifically to deal with Africa, and trusted that the Secretary-General would provide that section with resources commensurate with the priority accorded to it by the General Assembly.

15. Mr. MEDINA (Morocco) said that his delegation had agreed to work on the basis of the English text on an exceptional basis. All languages must be treated equally, and the agreement of delegations must be sought should such a procedure be necessary in future.

The meeting was suspended at 10.35 p.m. and resumed at 11.40 p.m.

Draft report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/50/L.29 (Parts I and II))

16. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/C.5/50/L.29 (Parts I and II)) said that the Committee recommended a gross appropriation of $2,712,265,200, with savings of $103,991,200, and an estimate for income other than income derived from staff assessment of $87,095,700. Net expenditure for the biennium 1996-1997 was thus estimated at $2,127,372,300.

17. The Committee also recommended an estimate of $393,806,000 as staff assessment for transfer in the course of the biennium 1996-1997 to the Tax Equalization Fund, from which credits were distributed to Member States in accordance with General Assembly resolution 973 (X).

18. The Committee had considered a consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates that were subject to the criteria for the use of the contingency fund and the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee, which had been presented orally. The consolidated amount fell within the available balance of the contingency fund and the Committee therefore approved the required amounts under the relevant sections of the programme budget. The reservations expressed by the delegations with respect to certain

items of expenditure included in the budget estimates were reflected in the relevant summary records of the Committee.

19. The results of the decisions taken by the Committee on individual expenditure and income sections in first reading were contained in the report. The latter also listed the requirements under the various sections of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. Finally, the report also dealt with the Committee's consideration of special subjects and contained its recommendations.

20. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take action on draft resolutions II A (Budget appropriations for the biennium 1996-1997), B (Income estimates for the biennium 1996-1997) and C (Financing of appropriations for the year 1996) in the draft report.

21. Draft resolutions II A, B and C were adopted without a vote.

22. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/50/49).

23. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/50/49). The amounts charged to the contingency fund amounted to $1,173,000, leaving a balance of $19,427,000 in the fund. In that regard, he wished to draw attention, once again, to paragraph 10 of document A/49/796, which requested the Secretary-General to submit, in the context of his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, information on the nature of expenses charged to the contingency fund so far, in order to enable the Advisory Committee to review procedures for the use, operation and level of the fund. That request had been reflected in paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 49/217. The Advisory Committee requested that the information should be submitted to it for consideration in 1996.

24. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee, in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 42/211, should recommend to the General Assembly the appropriation of the required amounts: $1,173,000 under the relevant sections of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, as distributed in paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/50/L.49, and that the Committee should inform the Assembly that a balance of $19,427,000 would remain in the contingency fund.

25. It was so decided.

26. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolution IV on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1996-1997. Owing to lack of time, the Advisory Committee had not been in a position to give in-depth consideration to the report of the Secretary-General on that question (A/C.5/50/30). Accordingly, he suggested that the Fifth Committee should defer consideration of the issue to the resumed fiftieth session. In the meantime, the current

arrangements could continue until a decision was taken on the question on the basis of the report of the Advisory Committee.

27. It was so decided.

28. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take action on draft resolution V on the Working Capital Fund for the biennium 1996-1997.

29. Mr. THORNE (United Kingdom) said that, owing to the lack of time, it had not been possible to reach a consensus on the amendments proposed by his delegation to the draft resolution under consideration. The United Kingdom, therefore, would return to the matter at the resumed session.

30. Draft resolution V was adopted without a vote.

AGENDA ITEM 114: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/50/L.18 and L.19)

Draft decision A/C.5/50/L.18

31. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take action on the draft decision entitled "Biennial programme of work for the Fifth Committee for 1996-1997" (A/C.5/50/L.18).

32. Draft decision A/C.5/50/L.18 was adopted without a vote.

Draft decision A/C.5/50/L.19

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take action on draft decision A/C.5/50/L.19 entitled "Action taken on certain items".

34. Draft decision A/C.5/50/L.19 was adopted without a vote.

COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

35. After an exchange of courtesies, in which Mr. CARVALHO (Brazil), on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, Mr. CHU Guangyou (China), on behalf of the Group of Asian States, Mr. ABELIAN (Armenia), Vice-Chairman, on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, and Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand), on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, took part, the CHAIRMAN declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the first part of the fiftieth session.

The meeting rose at 12.10 a.m.